

THE BIBLE VIEW

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"Let's Go Out to the Tree"

Bill Brinkworth

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil." Psalm 37:8

The argument became very heated. One red-faced teenager shouted at the other, "It's your fault. You started it. You're the one that" On and on he blasted the other young man and proceeded to scream that it was the other's fault.

Stopping his opponent mid-sentence, the other teen screamed back. He too stood his ground, "No, no. You're the one that started it. You did," and on he went with his side of the story.

Back and forth the squabble went, each accusing the other. Neither backed down or tried understanding the other. Each figured, if they would get louder than the other, one would give in and back down; neither did. The predictable next step in the argument happened; nose to nose, one pushed the other.

“It’s a fight! Fight! Fight!” watching classmates announced to others, so they too could see the boy-against-boy confrontation.

“Alright,” I broke in doing the teacher thing. “Break it up. Break it up,” as I stepped in to separate the scrappers. “Alright. Who started it?”

The answer was exactly what you would expect, “He did,” explained one.

“No, he did,” retorted the other, and so the bickering continued.

It was obvious that the disagreement was nowhere near being solved. “Com’ on, boys. Let’s go out to the tree and talk,” I suggested. Off we went to separate the two from their on-looking peers and to hopefully solve the crisis, under the spreading branches of an old oak outside the classroom.

I let one tell his side of the story first, demanding the other keep quiet and just listen. He did well, except for some obvious body language; and then it was the other young man’s turn to tell his side of the story. After both sides were heard, it was quite clear that after the half-an-hour discussion ended, that not one of the boys was going to concede and do anything to remedy the problem. Neither was willing to forgive or forget.

Finally, I turned to the one, who usually was the most sensitive and understanding, and said, “Look, this is going nowhere. No one is willing to try to fix the situation. Someone has to go first, and try to smooth things out. Someone has to realize, that unless pride is forgotten and one does not worry about being right, this situation will not be solved. No one will gain anything, but bitterness! Will you be the one to go first? Will you be the one to admit that perhaps you could have handled this a little better, and that this disagreement is not worth your being bitter at each other? It usually takes two to disagree.”

The boy thought about it, scuffed the dirt with his shoe, looked down and contemplated the situation. Finally, he saw that someone had to go first, unless he wanted this disagreement to never end. He did want it to be resolved. He looked the other boy in the eye, and said, “I am sorry this got out of hand. Yes, I should not have lost my temper”

The other, quickly followed suit. “Yea, I handled it wrongly, too. I shouldn’t have....” The wall of bitterness, pride, and selfishness had been broken down. Shortly, the two were talking and playing ball together like nothing had ever happened; all because one humbled himself and went first.

How many disagreements have never been resolved, all because one never gave up their pride and had the courage to go first? One’s pride may have been preserved in not working out the problem, but what was

gained? A friendship may have been lost or permanently weakened, and an unresolved bitterness grew and festered; all because one was waiting on the other to fix the controversy.

Relationships are not easy; be it between man and woman, parent and child, or between friends. There will come a time when there will be disagreements. How will they be handled? What does an unresolved conflict accomplish? Is one's being right in a disagreement really worth the loneliness, the loss of friendship, the festering bitterness, and lack of trust for future relationships?

To resolve issues, someone usually has to go first and attempt to change the situation. Disagreements rarely resolve themselves.

It does not matter who did what in the end. One has to humble one's self first. Many times, when one breaks the ice, the other will follow. When it comes down to it, all of us usually have done something wrong to have a disagreement ensuing.

In getting the matter right, it is not necessary to rehash how you have been wronged. That vicious circle will never end. It is time to admit your wrong in the situation. If we all look hard, there is usually something that we could have not said or handled differently in the confrontation. Start there in the restoration of a relationship. Do not be concerned with what the other did, but be concerned with what you did wrong. Get that part right with the other

person, yourself, and the Lord. The other person may do the same thing and admit he was wrong. He may not. Our concern should only be that we do the right thing. We have to answer for ourselves, not others.

The Bible tells us that we should get matters resolved as quickly as possible (Ephesians 4:26). The longer they fester, the more damage is done. I am sure there are many that are long past the time that they should be heading out to the old, oak tree.

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” — *Ephesians 4:26*

Getting Right with Others

Bill Brinkworth

It is always sad to see a once flourishing relationship replaced with little or no communication, much bitterness, anger, and unforgiveness. Unfortunately, many have to shamefully hang their head and admit that a relationship in their lives is not what it should be, or what it once was. It could be a family member, spouse, or acquaintance.

Sadder, over time the reason for the separation may have even be forgotten; but still someone does not talk to the other or a grudge is still held. It is easy to come up with excuses, as to how we are justified in saying or doing what we did to the other. Whatever the justification, the result is still the same, and a relationship has been shattered.

It is important to work on and repair any damage in any relationship. Here is some of what the Bible says about resolving our differences:

A friendship should be at ALL times, not just when things are going well.

“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” Proverbs 17:17

No matter what is done to us, we still should forgive others; no matter how many times we feel wronged.

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.” Matthew 18:21

Also: Luke 17:3-4

Love those that wrong you; do not hate them!

“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth ...Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.” Proverbs 24:17-18

“... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” Matthew 5:44-45

Return unkindness and ill treatment with kind, godly forgiveness.

“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not ...” Romans 12:14-16

“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:20-21

Getting even should not be on the Christian’s agenda!

“Recompense to no man evil for evil. ... avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Roman 12:17-19

God has forgiven us. We should forgive others.

“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” Colossians 3:13

An unforgiving attitude will come between you and the Father.

“But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark 11:26 Also: Mark 11:25-26, Matthew 6:12-15, Luke 6:36

“Well, you don’t know what that person did to me.”

“No, I don’t, but you know what you did against God, and he forgave you!”

Why Revival Was Blocked

D. L Moody

I remember one town that Mr. Sankey and myself visited. For a week, it seemed as if we were beating the air; there was no power in the meetings. At last, one day, I said that perhaps there was someone cultivating an unforgiving spirit.

The chairman of our committee, who was sitting next to me, got up and left the meeting right in view of the audience. The arrow had hit the mark, and gone home to the heart of the chairman of the committee. He had had trouble with someone for about six months. He at once hunted up this man and asked him to forgive him. He came to me with tears in his eyes, and said, "I thank God you came here." That night the inquiry-room was thronged. The chairman became one of the best workers I have ever known, and he has been active in Christian service ever since.

"He who forgives, ends the quarrel."